

NOAA's AUV Workshop

On February 4-5, 2004, NOS will be hosting a workshop for all NOAA line offices to explore NOAA's collaborative efforts in the development and implementation of Autonomous Underwater Vehicle (AUV) technology. The workshop will include presentations to educate potential NOAA users on the current state of AUV technology and its benefits and limitations, and provide a forum for NOAA offices to share current project status and future plans.

AUVs are unmanned, untethered submersible robots that are capable of carrying out missions autonomously. NOAA has been involved in supporting the development of this and Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROV's) since the early 1990's. Under Sea Grant support, Odyssey II was operated from the NOAA ship Discoverer as part of the 1994 and 1995 VENTS programs (in a collaboration with the NOAA Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory). A combination of tethered and free-swimming dives demonstrated navigation and tracking of the AUV over the Juan de Fuca Ridge, and fully-autonomous, untethered operation, as deep as 1,400 meters.

NOS intends the workshop to establish partnerships between NOAA offices pursuing AUV technology and identify potential uses and common requirements. The information shared during the workshop will provide the input for a NOAA-wide workgroup, which will be chartered to create a formal NOAA AUV requirements document for both shallow and deep water uses.

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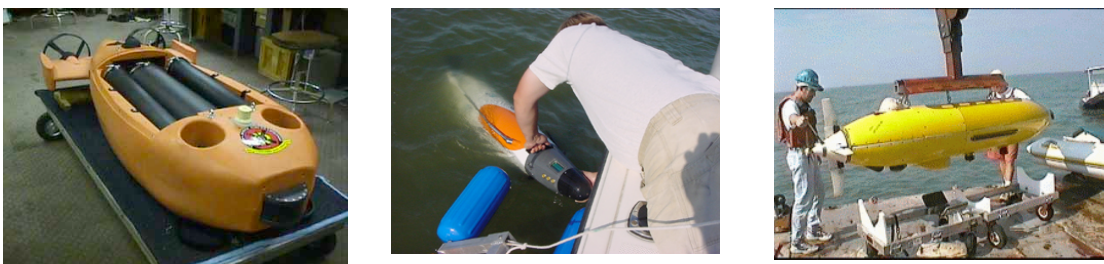


Figure 1: Examples of different AUVs